## Local Government Mandate Statement Kentucky Legislative Research Commission 2023 Regular Session

**Part I: Measure Information** 

Bill Request #: 882
Bill #: SB 92
Document ID #: 1668
Bill Subject/Title: AN ACT relating to animals and making an appropriation.
Sponsor: Senator Jimmy Higdon
Unit of Government: X City X County X Urban-County Unified Local
X Charter County X Consolidated Local X Government
Office(s) Impacted: Law enforcement agencies; County animal shelters
Requirement: X Mandatory Optional
Effect on Powers & Duties: X Modifies Existing Adds New Eliminates Existing

## Part II: Bill Provisions and the Estimated Fiscal Impact Relating to Local Government

SB 92 amends KRS 258.119 to make the Animal Control and Care Fund the recipient of fines and penalties collected under this legislation; amends KRS 258.500 by defining terms and listing the requirements a person with an assistance dog must meet before their rights, privileges, and accommodations in this legislation are granted to them; to permit an establishment to inquire about the assistance dog and refuse admittance if it jeopardizes the health and safety of others and makes the handler liable for damages caused by the animal.

This legislation makes it unlawful for a person to misrepresent a dog as an assistance dog. Violators can be fined up to a \$1,000. SB 92 also raises the minimum penalty from \$250 to \$500 and removes imprisonment for various actions that violate the rights of a person with an assistance dog. Funds generated by payment of these fines, minus costs and commissions, are to be credited to the Animal Control and Care Fund – 50 percent used to fund spay and neuter clinics and 50 percent to be used for block grants to county animal shelters.

The fiscal impact of SB 92 on local governments is indeterminable, but could result in a slight increase in funding for some units of local government. Counties may receive additional funds under SB 92 by virtue of additional money for spay/neuter clinics and for block grants for county animal shelters. The amount would depend on the number of fines levied and collected and the applications received from the counties for their animal shelters.

The bill eliminates imprisonment for certain offenses related to violating the rights of persons with assistance animals. Current law allows for imprisonment in the county jail for a period of 10 to 30 days. The elimination of imprisonment would result in fewer incarcerations. There could be violations for persons misrepresenting a dog as an assistance animal, but this would result only in fines with no incarceration.

With fewer charges that could result in imprisonment, there would be fewer incarcerations in one of Kentucky's 74 full-service jails or three life safety jails. While the expense of housing inmates varies by jail, this estimated impact will be based on an average cost to incarcerate of \$40.11 per day. While the majority of misdemeanor defendants are granted bail, those who do not will also cost local jails an average cost to incarcerate of \$40.11 per day.

The bill would allow any local government that makes provisions for public housing to check the documentation related to the assistance dog, and it holds the dog's handler liable for any damages caused by the dog. This could increase revenues upon collection. Government offices, transportation, and public health services may need to establish policies for determining whether an assistance dog jeopardizes the health and safety of others, but the fiscal impact should be minimal.

The bill could require local law enforcement procedures relating to eviction, citation, and damage fees, but the cost of developing these procedures would be minimal.

## Part III: Differences to Local Government Mandate Statement from Prior Versions

Part II, above, pertains to SB 92 as introduced. There are no previous versions for comparison.

Data Source(s): LRS Staff; Department of Corrections

Preparer: CTH (WB) Reviewer: KHC Date: 2/21/23